



# Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**VIRGIN ISLANDS LIQUOR WHOLESALER ENDS EXCLUSIONARY PRACTICES  
AFTER JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FILES ANTITRUST SUIT**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A Virgin Islands liquor wholesaler who controlled about 96 percent of the Islands' liquor business today was sued by the Justice Department's Antitrust Division for restraining competition in the liquor market. Simultaneously, the Department filed a proposed settlement in which the wholesaler, Topa Equities (V.I.) Ltd agreed to let its suppliers deal with other wholesalers and not to interfere with the business operations of its competitors.

In a suit filed in U.S. District Court in the Virgin Islands, the Department alleged that Topa obtained the exclusive Virgin Islands distribution rights of almost every brand of distilled spirits in the world market, and that obtaining and retaining these rights were contracts in restraint of trade. Topa has annual sales of over \$24 million.

Anne K. Bingaman, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Antitrust Division, said, "The relief obtained in this decree will help restore competition in the wholesale liquor market in

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the Virgin Islands by allowing suppliers to move freely to other wholesalers and by ensuring that Topa does not use its dominant market position unfairly against competitors."

The proposed settlement must be approved by the court.

As required by the Antitrust Procedures and Penalties Act, the proposed consent decree, along with the Department's competitive impact statement, will be published in the Federal Register and any person may comment on the proposed decree by submitting comments to the Department. After a 60-day public comment period the United States will reply to any public comments and will seek entry of the decree by the court.

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